



July 7, 2005

The Honorable Jim Talent
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Talent,

On behalf of America's 3,066 counties, the National Association of Counties (NACO) applauds you for sponsoring the Combat Meth Act (S 103). NACO believes that restricting the sale of precursor chemicals, such as pseudoephedrine, is a critical step in fighting the spread of methamphetamine abuse.

As you know, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency estimates that only 20 percent of methamphetamine is produced in small toxic labs. However, these labs pose a significant risk to their community and are very costly to local governments to investigate and remediate former sites. If enacted, your legislation would establish a national standard on precursor control and broaden what many states have already done to fight the spread of methamphetamine. Many of these states have already reported significant decreases in small toxic methamphetamine labs. NACO believes that similar success would be found on the national level if the Combat Meth Act were enacted.

Two recent NACO surveys confirmed that methamphetamine abuse has reached epidemic proportions across the nation. Nearly 60 percent of county law enforcement officials rated methamphetamine as the largest drug problem in their county and 87 percent reported an increase in meth related arrests starting three years ago. Furthermore, meth abuse has led to increases in other crimes. Seventy percent of those surveyed state that robberies or burglaries have gone up and 62 percent report increases in domestic violence. Additionally, we surveyed child welfare officials on the dangers facing children because of meth. In this study, forty percent of all child welfare officials reported an increase in out of home placements because of meth in the last year.

NACO policy calls for comprehensive methamphetamine legislation that would include treatment, law enforcement, precursor control, child protective services, research, cleanup, education and prevention. We would like to work with you and your colleagues to enact such a bill.

Once again, thank you, and we look forward to working with you to pass the Combat Meth Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Larry E. Naake". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Larry" being more prominent.

Larry E. Naake
Executive Director
National Association of Counties